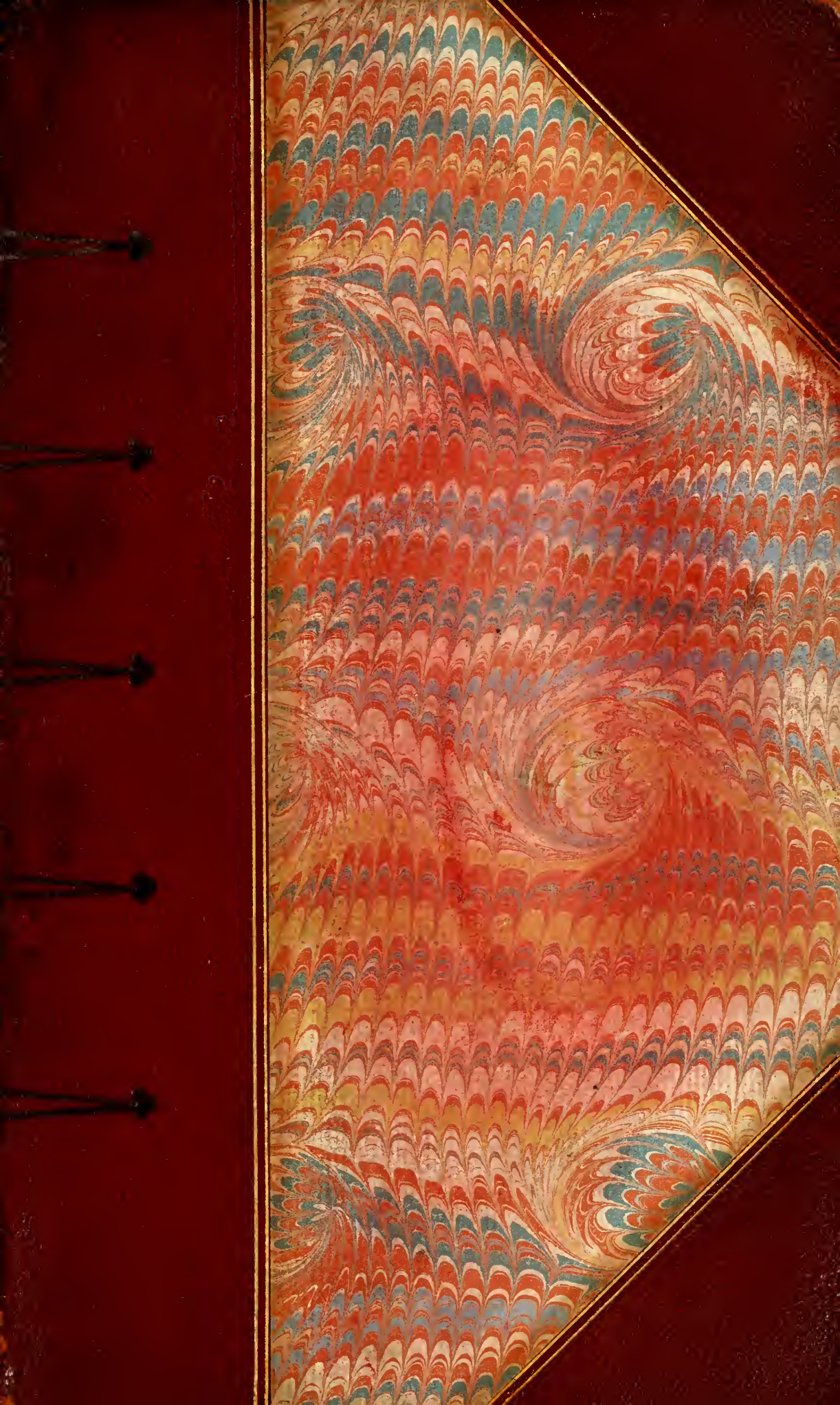

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A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

SUPPRESSION BY COL. BURR,

OF THE

HISTORY

OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN ADAMS, LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

WRITTEN BY JOHN WOOD,

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF SWITZERLAND AND OF THE SWISS REVOLUTION.

To which is added

A BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES;

AND OF

GENERAL HAMILTON:

With ſtrictures on the

CONDUCT OF JOHN ADAMS,

And on the

CHARACTER OF GENERAL C. C. PINCKNEY.

EXTRACTED VERBATIM FROM THE SUPPRESSED HISTORY.

By A CITIZEN of New-York.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY DENNISTON AND CHEETHAM,
No. 142, PEARL-STREET.
1802.

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PREFACE.

THE minute facts related in the following narrative, may induce the belief in the reader, that Mr. Wood is the writer of it. It may be ſuppoſed that no one but Mr. Wood, who may be properly termed the *agent* of Mr. Burr to negociate the *ſuppreſſion*, could be acquainted with the incidents appurtenant to the negociation, and which are truly related in the narrative. Such a concluſion, however, would be incorrect; and it is merely to obviate it, that this ſhort preface is written. The narrative is *not penned by Mr. Wood, by Meſſrs. Barlaſs and Ward, nor by Mr. William P. Van Neſs*; it is written by one who from his *connection with the parties*, had an opportunity of knowing the very minutiæ of every ſtep taken in the ſuppreſſion: nor is he induced to lay it before the public from motives of *perſonal ill will* to the vice preſident; conſiderations of a more noble and elevated nature have mixed themſelves in the determination to develope the tranſaction. Combining the ſuppreſſion with *other circumſtances* of a *much more weighty and ſerious nature*, and which ſhall, with all due ſpeed be laid before the public, the writer cannot reſiſt the belief, that ſome thing "is rotten in Denmark;" that under an exterior which, though not altogether pleaſing, is calculated to make falſe impreſſions on unſuſpicious minds, *ſomething exceedingly unpropitious to the freedom of the union, is at this moment contemplated by the vice preſident*. In this he *may* be miſtaken; he ſincerely hopes he is; but he entertains, he thinks, *well founded doubts* of the fairneſs of the views of the vice preſident, and it comports with the duty he owes to freedom, to un-

Dec. 1, 1937 Buhl Foundation (Shea)

fold them. The preſent moment is peculiarly auſpicious to an inveſtigation of whatever ſurmiſes unfriendly to Mr. Burr may have gone abroad. Our annual election is over; the preſs is free as air; and univerſal placidneſs reigns over the nation. Under theſe circumſtances, he invites inveſtigation, that if he be miſtaken in his opinions of the views of the vice preſident, they may be corrected by arguments and by facts. When this ſhall have been done, he promiſes with much ſincerity and truth, to give to Mr. Burr a moſt cordial ſupport. On the other hand, ſhould theſe opinions, by an ample examination of his views, be confirmed, Mr. Burr ſhall meet with an opponent, in the author, commenſurate with his talents and his leiſure.

NEW-YORK, *May*, 1802.

NARRATIVE &c.

MR. JOHN Wood contracted with Meſſrs. Barlaſs and Ward, bookſellers in the city of New-York, to write a Hiſtory of the Adminiſtration of John Adams, late preſident of the United States. In conformity with the agreement, the hiſtory was written, and an edition of twelve hundred and fifty copies of it printed. As uſual, it was advertiſed for ſubſcription in ſeveral News-papers, many ſubſcribers to the work were obtained, and the public were in daily expectation of witneſſing its publication. The edition was bound in boards and ready for ſale early in December laſt, by the proprietors of it. A faithful hiſtory of an epoch ſo intereſting in the annals of the federal government, as that of the adminiſtration of Mr. Adams, could not fail to excite public curioſity. Accordingly, an unuſual ſolicitude was every where manifeſt; public expectation was awakened; and we looked forward with the pleaſing hope of ſeeing accurately portrayed, thoſe acts which had attracted the attention of Europe, excited the ſenſibility of the Union, and which had put in Jeopardy its freedom and repoſe.

A correct hiſtory of the late adminiſtration, would be the moſt precious contribution a citizen could make to the community: to unfold the motives, and to delineate the meaſures of that adminiſtration in a well written hiſtory, would tend to conſummate and to render durable the recent triumph which reaſon obtained over a party, who have endeavoured to impoſe upon the union a polity ſubverſive of our republican inſtitutions. Such is the intimate

connection between freedom and hiſtory, that the one cannot exiſt where the other is not: they are by nature, inſeparable companions, and impart to each other mutual aid. Hiſtory may not inaptly be termed a mirror, which truly repreſents paſt objects by reflection. It admoniſhes us to avoid the evil, and it equally excites us to admire and to imitate the commendable acts of paſt life. It may be denominated a compaſs, which ſafely guides us through the devious paths of adverſe viciſſitudes. Such indeed is the natural propenſity of man to quieſcence and forgetfulneſs, that, were it not for hiſtory, he would ceaſe to remember thoſe things which were tranſacted but as yeſterday, although they ſhould be eſſential to his ſafety and repoſe. Hence the wiſdom of our cuſtom to read annually and publicly our Declaration of Independence, which will be heard with rapture, ſo long as liberty ſhall have a friend and virtue ſhall be cheriſhed. While it reminds us of thoſe covert and open acts by which attempts were made to inſlave the colonies, it inſtructs us in our rights, and cordially invites us to guard againſt ſimilar attempts within the union.

The adminiſtration of Mr. Adams forms an era in the annals of this country, of little leſs moment than that which immediately preceded our revolution. I am much miſtaken if a ſyſtematic plan were not formed by it, to introduce into the union, that preciſe ſyſtem of internal police, to oppoſe which the States ſucceſsfully appealed to arms. Nor is this opinion made up of mere conjecture. We have evidence ſtrong as death of the deſign. That adminiſtration copied implicitly the acts of the Engliſh government, even in the worſt and moſt vitiated period of its hiſtory. We had alien and ſedition laws, ſpies and informers. Our dungeons were converted into habitations for patriots. The

will of the executive became the animating principle of our federal legiſlature, and that will was palpably in favour of monarchy.* The preſs was arreſted, and the tongue ſtood ſtill. Riot ſucceeded to riot, and he who would not bow obſequious aſſent to the maniacal deeds of the day, was every moment in perſonal danger. War was courted with all the eagerneſs and alacrity of ſelf-defence. Hopes were entertained that out of hoſtility with a foreign nation, a ſyſtem of polity would ariſe propitious to the views of the then conductors of our affairs. Hence, though a war with

* In addition to the adminiſtrative acts of Mr. Adams, as well as his writings, which evidently favour a ſyſtem of polity inconſonant with our own, he has frequently expreſſed himſelf friendly to a government ſimilar to that of Great Britain. The following letter bears ſtrong teſtimony of this fact, and evinces the impropriety of having placed Mr. Adams at the helm of our affairs.

"*Portſmouth October* 10*th*, 1800.

Dear Sir,

"Your agreeable favor of the 4th inſtant, has this moment come to hand. I am greatly rejoiced to ſee gentlemen of property and influence come forward at this eventful moment in the common cauſe of our country: I have no doubt we ſhall yet be ſaved.

"I am now packing my baggage and ſhall ſet out in the ſtage to-morrow morning, for the city of Waſhington. I hope to be in Baltimore the beginning of next month: this prevents my anſwering your letter ſo fully as I could wiſh, having only one moment to ſpare.

"In the converſation held between Mr. Adams, Mr. Taylor and myſelf, Mr. Adams certainly expreſſed himſelf (as far as my memory ſerves me) in the very words mentioned in your letter, viz. That he hoped or expected to ſee the day when Mr. Taylor and his friend Mr. Giles would be convinced that the people of America could not be happy without an *hereditary chief Magiſtrate and Senate*, or at leaſt *for life*.

Believe me ſincerely,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN LANGDON."

Mr. Samuel Ringold.

that nation was, as the event has proved, eaſily avoidable, meaſures exactly fitted to precipitate us into its frightful embrace, were ſedulouſly purſued. It is to this ſolicitude to drag the union into a war with France, that thoſe ſlanders are attributable which were ſo liberally circulated of Dr. Logan, as well as that legiſlative cenſure which was imperiouſly pronounced againſt him for his patriotic and amiable interpoſition in favour of peace. How ineffable was the mortification and diſappointment of the war-party, when it was demonſtrated to the conviction of the nation, that every conceſſion which we had a right to demand of France could be more readily obtained without, than with hoſtility! After the reſult of thoſe amicable offices performed by Dr. Logan was known, the mantle of deluſion which had been artfully thrown over the country, rapidly diſappeared. Our citizens began to caſt their eyes about them like men awakening from a diſorderly dream; and they plainly perceived that our government was the principal, if not the ſole obſtacle to a reconciliation of the two nations. Thus the charm was broken, and the "pleaſing hope, the fond deſire, the longing after" a government diſſimilar to our own, which was expected to ariſe from, and which was ſuſpended on the event of war, inſtantly vaniſhed. The foundation gave way, and the fancied edifice fell.

We have paſſed through theſe ſcenes without regret, becauſe, I hope, not without profit. But may it not with confidence be ſaid, that the advantage can only be meaſured by our remembrance of them? We look back upon thoſe ſcenes as a traveller views from a delightful grove the deſerts through which he has paſſed with difficulty, and without one ray of conſoling hope to cheer his languid ſpirits. As by compariſon, adverſity ſuperadds a zeſt to

ſubſequent pleaſure, ſo we ſhall appreciate the advantages we now enjoy by duly comparing them with the cheerleſs days we have left behind us. But when we conſider the natural imbecility of memory, and the conſtant application which is neceſſary, even to preſerve the little knowledge we have acquired by experience and reſearch, we cannot but regret that the only hiſtory written of the adminiſtration of Mr. Adams has been *ſuppreſſed*, not by the imperious mandates of law, but by a ſingle individual, and in all probability to promote private views incompatible with the public welfare.

The period is arrived when it is no longer neceſſary to conceal the fact, that the hiſtory of the adminiſtration of Mr. Adams was *ſuppreſſed* by the *vice preſident of the United States*. What the motives and objects of Mr. Burr were for the *ſuppreſſion*, we are left principally to conjecture and inference to determine. In ſuch a tranſaction, however, thoſe who *know* the *vice-preſident*, will readily allow that *poſitive* proof of the motives of the ſuppreſſion is not to be exhibited. There is about his actions a *cunning*, a ſort of *legerdemain*, which, while it defies concluſive proof, eludes the moſt acute reſearch. In every thing therefore, which relates to this gentleman, no higher a ſpecies of teſtimony *ought* to be *expected*, than that of a circumſtantial or preſumptive nature. All the three kinds of proof indeed, are in their nature nothing more than comparative, and purſuing degrees of compariſon to the extent of their applicability, *and no further*, it may be truly affirmed, that *preſumptive* proof of whatever bear relation to Mr. Burr, is as *poſitive*, as the *moſt abſolute* evidence againſt plain, honeſt citizens. Habituated to intrigue, and diſtinguiſhed by the *ſecrecy and celerity* of his movements, it is problematical whether even his confidential friends could bring home to

him a ſingle act of his of moment. It is ſaid, and I believe with truth, that one of his primary political maxims is, never to *converſe* on an important ſubject in the preſence of *two men!* Nor is it, it is believed, leſs a maxim with him to avoid communicating, even to his confidants, his ideas in writing on political ſubjects. Oral communication is his element, and even *this* is regulated by a rule of *ſecrecy* ſo nice, as to forbid his converſing on material affairs in the preſence of more than one man! Thus fortified by ſubtle rules from which he never departs, it will not be expected that I can ſo far enter his cabinet of curious ſecrets as to adduce that ſort of teſtimony concerning the ſuppreſſion of the hiſtory, as will impoſe conviction on every mind, that it was ſuppreſſed with views unfriendly to the adminiſtration of Mr. *Jefferſon.* Nor indeed will this be ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on. I ſhall content myſelf in the *preſent publication*, with offering a few remarks in addition to what has been ſaid, and with laying the facts I poſſeſs before the public, who are moſt competent to form a correct opinion of the ſubject.

Habituated to ſecret movements and dark conſultations, it may be ſaid, that the convert manner in which Mr. Burr carried on the negociation for the ſuppreſſion of the hiſtory, was nothing out of the ordinary way in which he conducts his political affairs. But let it not be forgetten, that Mr. Burr poſſeſſes ſufficient powers of mind to diſtinguiſh between what requires concealment and what does not; and that both the one and the other are by him regulated by his inordinate views of perſonal ambition. In matters in which the public are concerned, ſecrecy which abhors diſcloſure and ſhuns the light of day, ill comports with the general welfare. Nor is it to be preſumed the public can with ſafety, repoſe confidence in him who appears ſolicitous on-

ly to wrap his actions in profound myſtery. Such conduct is calculated to inſpire jealouſy and diſtruſt. A ſtate juggler who, retiring from the public eye, ſpreads miſchief by his puppets, may aſtoniſh with his ropes and pullies the ſatellites by whom he is ſurrounded ; but a ſenſible public knowing their rights and valuing their liberty, will abandon him as they would flee from a deſtructive peſtilence.

Thus Mr. Burr is conducting his political affairs, and mounting ſtep by ſtep to the ſummit of political authority. Verſed in the art of hocus-pocus, while ſitting in his ſtate room waiting the entrance of his political tools into the antichamber, his mandates fly through the union and extend to its extremities. Hence his inviſible ſpirit inſinuates itſelf into every circle, and with its deleterious qualities corrupts whatever it touches. Operating upon the public by numerous agents, confidence muſt ſometimes be *miſplaced ;* and from neceſſity he is reluctantly conſtrained to employ men who are either imcompetent to carry into execution his ſecret deſigns, or who, vainly proud of their menial and diſhonourable offices, proclaim their buſineſs by unfolding their connection. Hence, to know the mind of the principal, it is only neceſſary to ſound the opinion of the agent. To aſcertain the views of the former, nothing more is requiſite than to hear the latter ſpeak.. Theſe agents differ however in degrees of taciturnity and circumſpection. Some, perhaps from long habit, are little inferior in ſubtilty, in ſimulation and diſſimulation to the prime mover. But there is *one*, who, unfortunately for Mr. Burr, divulges ſecrets confided to him with great indiſcretion. He is young, impetuous, and loquacious : And, if general report be true, nature (ſometimes ſportive) placed in his head the tongue of a woman. It is probable that this young man, without intending it, has injured Mr. Burr much. This, no doubt,

is the effect of an over-zeal, at all hazards and by all means, to lift him to the pinnacle of political glory. Whether this ardency of zeal arifes from *expectancy* or *difappointment* is not precifely known; it is however believed that both thefe ingredients are mingled with thofe motives which impel the youth to move with the velocity of Mercury, and to chatter with the fluency of a magpye!

The fuppreffion of the hiftory, is one of thofe items in the catalogue of Mr. Burr's intrigues, which required, from a variety of confiderations, unufual care to hide it from the public. But here the danger to which he was expofed, was equal to the novelty and magnitude of the undertaking. The fuppreffion could not be effected by the ordinary agents, not even by the *fubtleft* clafs. It was neceffary to call in, in fome refpects, extraneous aid. In this there was danger. For in proportion to the multiplication of agents, the *craft* with its artifices were liable to expofure. Of this no one could be more fenfible than the vice-prefident. The fuppreffion was however a favorite point; to effect it was an effential part of his general fyftem of fineffe; and fomething muft therefore be rifked.

Mr. Wood, the writer of the *fuppreffed* hiftory, and Mr. Burr, have long been intimate. When the latter firft heard that the former was about to write a hiftory of the adminiftration of Mr. Adams, he expreffed a defire to fee him on the fubject. Accordingly an interview was had, but for what particular purpofe is not precifely afcertained. It is, however, known, and afferted as true, that Mr. Burr furnifhed Mr. Wood with materials for writing *his own biography*, which is a maftер piece of the hyperbolic, and exhibits in Mr. Burr, to whom the biography of himfelf was

ſubmitted by Mr. Wood for inſpection, no common degree of vanity. His revolutionary ſervices, which were ſo trifling as to eſcape the notice of the writers of the different hiſtories of the revolution now extant, were ſo repreſented by Mr. Wood as to dazzle the reader with the brilliancy of his exploits. The painting was undoubtedly fine, but it bears no characteriſtic reſemblance of the original. For this I am not diſpoſed to cenſure Mr. Wood, who drew the martial character and revolutionary achievements of the vice-preſident from materials with which he was furniſhed by *himſelf*. He had no public documents to which he could have recourſe. Hiſtory is ſilent as the grave concerning the revolutionary ſervices of Mr. Burr. Ramſay never mentions him once in his two volumes, and it is believed the ſame may be ſaid of Gordon and others. This is ſufficiently excuſatory of Mr. Wood. He was to write a biography of Mr. Burr; he could not write it without materials; theſe could only be furniſhed by him who was to form the ſubject of the biographic eulogium; and if they were improper ones, the fault was attributable, not to Mr. Wood, but to Mr. Burr, who ſupplied him with them. But while I cenſure miſrepreſentation in others, it is peculiarly incumbent on me to avoid being guilty of it myſelf. I am equally concerned with other men in doing juſtice to all, and, following her pleaſing dictates, I ſincerely declare it as my opinion, that although Mr. Burr has no good title to the *martial* character of *Bonaparte*, he is not altogether deſtitute of military merit. Nature may have formed him for an *Anthony*, but may it not be aſked whether ſhe has endued him with the juſt and magnanimous ſoul of *Ariſtides ?*

Proceeding in this ſtrain of exaggeration, the character given of Mr. Burr in other reſpects in the ſuppreſſed hiſto-

ry, is liable to cenſure. This was, however, no doubt done by Mr. Wood, as an additional recommendation of the vice-preſident to the favour of his fellow-citizens. When it was written, Mr. Wood could have had no idea of Mr. Burr's ſubtle machinations to ſupplant Mr. Jefferſon, nor of his agents employed in this diſhonourable work.

The 7th number of Hardie's "New Biographical Dictionary," pages 406-7, contains an elegantly drawn portrait of the vice-preſident's father by Governor Livingſton. Aaron Burr (the father of the vice-preſident) was undoubtedly a man of amiable manners, of good erudition, and of a ſublime genius. He has left behind him a character honourable to his memory, honourable to his country, and which will command eſteem, if not reverence, while learning, and piety, and patriotiſm ſhall have a friend. Although governor Livingſton's character, therefore, of this worthy man, may be a little overſtrained, we view without reluctance t he exuberant fancy of the limner, and readily pardon trifling aberrations from exactitude. The character given by governor Livingſton of the father, Mr. Wood aſſerts in the ſuppreſſed hiſtory, which contains the extract, is exactly applicable to the ſon. How far this is correct, I leave the reader to judge for himſelf.

"Governor Livingſton, ſpeaking of the aſſiduity and uſefulneſs of the father of the vice-preſident, thus expreſſes himſelf." "Though a perſon of a ſlender and delicate make, to encounter fatigue, he had a heart of ſteel; and for the diſpatch of buſineſs, the moſt amazing talents joined to a conſtancy of mind, that enſured ſucceſs in ſpite of every obſtacle. As long as an enterprize appeared not abſolutely impoſſible, he know no diſcouragement; but in proportion

to its difficulty augmented his diligence : and by an infuperable fortitude, *frequently accomplifhed what his friends and acquaintance conceived utterly impracticable.*"*

This paffage is extracted *verbatim* from the *fuppreffed* hiftory ; it is however to be found, as I before ftated, and as Mr. Wood has himfelf alfo ftated, in " Hardie's Biographical Dictionary."

Thus deified Mr. Burr could not but be pleafed with the tranfcendent character given of him by his new biographer. He little imagined it would ever be publicly known, that the outlines of it were drawn by himfelf. Charmed with the notion of being transformed into a celeftial being, he was folicitous to view his likenefs in print before the hiftory was iffued to the public.

In November 1801 Mr. Burr vifited Philadelphia to project with others a *new Manhattan bank.* As ufual, in paffing through the ftate of New-Jerfey, it is believed on credible information, he waited on the *honourable* Jonathan Dayton. Between this *gentleman* and Col. Burr, an uninterrupted and cordial intercourfe has taken place ever fince the celebrated ftruggle in the houfe of repref entatives for a federal executive. Whether Mr. Wood's hiftory formed a fubject of their colloquies on national affairs, is not known; but from a variety of circumftances it is deemed probable. For although Mr. Burr had not feen the whole of the fheets as they were iffued from the prefs, he was fufficiently acquainted with the contents of the hiftory to

* As far as the words in *italics* relate to the *intrigues* of the vice-prefident, they are applicable.

form a pretty accurate notion of its tenor. He had reaſon to believe, for inſtance, that the characters who acted conſpicuous parts in the federal drama of 1798-9, were ſeverely laſhed by Mr. Wood.

On the 4th or 5th of December, 1801, Mr. Burr, after the project of the new Philadelphia Bank was completed, returned to New-York. The hiſtory was then ready for ſale, and was to have been iſſued to the public the following week. One of his firſt enquiries was about it, and Mr. Wood was requeſted by Mr. Burr to bring a copy of it to his houſe that he might peruſe the character given of himſelf previous to the publication of the hiſtory. This requeſt was complied with, and Mr. Burr either diſcovered or pretended to have diſcovered *ſome errors* in his biography *reſpecting dates.* He very ſegaciouſly felicitated himſelf on the diſcovery before the hiſtory was given to the public; deſired Mr. Wood to leave the copy with him, and promiſed (after the errors of date were corrected) to defray the expence of printing a new ſheet of his own life and exploits. Theſe errors would have made Mr. Burr about *fifty*, whereas he ſtated he was not more than *forty-five* years of age. Viewing matters *proſpectively*, it was deemed of ſome conſequence to correct the miſ-dates. To one who is looking forward to the Preſidency; to gain, at the age of fifty, five years on the ſide of youth, is no inconſiderable acquiſition!

According to promiſe, Mr. Wood waited on Mr. Burr the following morning to receive the copy with the corrections; ſome *evil genius*, however, had prompted Mr. Burr to read the volume throughout, and *more errors* were diſcovered. Theſe were enumerated to Mr. Wood with

great apparent candor and sincerity.* It was objected that the character of Mr. Hamilton, Charles C. Pinckney, Jonathan Dayton, and General Washington were not accurately delineated; and it was added with *great tenderness* that the book contained many *libellous* passages. He therefore enquired whether an agreement could not be made with Barlass and Ward to *suppress it?* He conceived that the character of Mr. Hamilton was *misrepresented*, meaning where encomium was bestowed upon him it was unmerited—that Mr. Charles C. Pinckney, who was represented by Mr. Wood as a person of *less integrity* than Mr. Hamilton, was a man of *purer principle* than any other in the union. Upon General Washington, undeserved eulogiums he said had been lavished; and that during his Presidency he had evinced himself a person possessed of unbounded vanity, without talents either as a soldier or a scholar. Continuing his criticisms, Mr. Wood, he observed, had wholly mistaken the character of the *honourable* Jonathan Dayton. Referring to his connection with Francis Childs, which Mr. Wood had noticed in his history to the disgrace of Mr. Dayton, he declared that Childs was a *scoundrel*, and indebted to Mr. Dayton in the sum of *one hundred thousand dollars*. The character given by Mr. Wood of Mr. Adams, he liked; it was a bad one, and he thought it representative of the ex-president.† Mr. Burr reserved his critical remarks on the

* The reader may rely, if he please, implicitly on the following facts. They are indubitable. They can be proved in a court of law if necessary.

† The reader is referred for information on this subject to Dayton's connection with Francis Childs, published in a pamphlet entitled, "Dayton's speculations in sixteen letters," and to a bill filed in the court of Chancery of this state, by Dayton and Lawrence against Childs. These are sufficient to sink Dayton even in his own estimation.

character given by Mr. Wood of Mr. Jefferson to the last. This he did not think exactly descriptive of that illustrious person. He observed that Mr. Jefferson was not a man of *genius ;* he was a *plodding*, *mechanical* person, of little activity of mind, and possessed of a judgment not very discriminative. Mr. Jefferson he said had also another great failing ; he courted and was fond of popularity ! He suggested to Mr. Wood the propriety of writing his character anew, and promised to furnish him with facts relative to Mr. Jefferson which were little known to the public, and which would be found exceedingly interesting. Respecting the *libellous* passages contained in the history, Mr. Burr was mute ; he did not even condescend to mention one of them. His whole soul seemed absorbed in disposing of certain persons as Bonaparte disposes of petty nations, to gratify his ambition and to exalt his fame.*

* It is difficult to ascertain the precise point at which Mr. Burr aims. Why, for example, he wishes to exalt the character of Mr. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and debase that of Mr. Hamilton, may seem, at first glance, enigmatical. It is known that Mr. Pinckney was and is the favourite of Mr. Hamilton. But it is also known that Mr. Hamilton used his influence to obtain, at the presidential election, after the votes were known to be equal, the elevation of Mr. Jefferson to the chair of state in preference to that of Mr. Burr. It is probable that Mr. Burr is intriguing to place, with the federalists, Mr. Pinckney in the presidential chair at the next election, and to effect, by so doing, a continuation of himself in the second office of government. This is the way in which he expects to make his peace with them. He is now conscious that *he is too well known to be supported by the republicans*. Viewing the matter then in this light, which I think not a false one, Mr. Hamilton is evidently in his way ! ! Mr. Burr would willingly go through another vice-presidency probation with Mr. Pinckney at his head, to ascend afterwards to the Presidency. This, I am of opinion, he now judges, and judges rightly, to be his dernier resort.

These were the reasons assigned by Mr. Burr for his solicitude to *suppress* the whole edition of the history of the administration, to have *a new history written under his immediate inspection, and to be made up of materials to be furnished principally by himself.* These he promised to supply in abundance, and dilated on the value such a production would be of to the union. By way of superinducement, he stated that facts would transpire in Congress in the course of ten or twelve days which would astonish the nation, and convince Mr. Wood that the notions he had entertained of the various characters just enumerated, were erroneus. But over

Whether the New-England states [Massachusetts & Connecticut I mean, for New-Hampshire, Vermont and Rhode-Island are now republican] will cordially co-operate to promote such a project is yet to be ascertained. It is certain that Mr. Adams is the favourite of those two states, as well as of many respectable and influential federalists in some of the other states. Mr. Burr may not, however, consider Mr. Adams a very powerful opponent: Yet his anxious desire that the frightful but just portrait of the ex-president should go to the public unaltered, is calculated to induce the belief that he entertains some apprehensions on this ground. Dayton is friendly to Pinckney, and on this account it is (as well as others of a delicate nature which I will explain in another publication) that so cordial a reciprocity of sentiment and good offices daily takes place between Mr. Burr and himself. That Mr. Burr is unfriendly to the character of WASHINGTON, is not strange. That they entertained a mutual dislike of each other while the General was living, is well known. That Mr. Burr is hostile to Mr. Jefferson, is nothing new to well informed men. That he avails himself of every mean, of every convenient opportunity to render his administration unpopular, is too notorious to be questioned by any man conversant with our affairs. Hence we may account for Mr. Jefferson's not being "a man of genius," for his being "a plodding, mechanical person," and for his "love of popularity." Strange that a man who is not scrupulous about the means by which he is essaying to mount to the most dignified office on earth, should censure, in malignant whispers, Mr. Jefferson's "love of popularity!"

the history Mr. Wood had no controul; he had written it by contract for Barlass and Ward, who were the sole owners of it. Being, however, the writer of the history, he was thought by Mr. Burr the most eligible person to negociate its suppression. He therefore requested Mr. Wood to wait on Barlass and Ward to make an agreement with them to suppress it, and promised that *he* and *his friends* would bear the expence which might be agreed upon. Not clearly perceiving Mr. Burr's views for wishing it to be suppressed, and being anxious, as every author necessarily is, to make his work as perfect as possible, Mr. Wood accepted the office of *agent of Mr. Burr*, and, receiving suitable instructions, commenced the negociation.*

There was one difficulty in the suppression which it was necessary immediately to remove. In the preceding week a copy of the history had been sent to London by the *Juliana*, for publication. It was necessary to countermand the order of publication immediately. Had the history been published in London, the suppression of it here would not have answered the intended end. The suppression was to be universal and entire. After its publication in London, it would soon have reached America. To this point therefore, the talents and address of the negociator were early directed.

* Mr. Burr enquired of Mr. Wood, if he was not acquainted with a person who had influence over Mr. Barlass? He was referred to one of the professors of Columbia College, a gentleman of great respectability. To this gentleman Mr. Burr applied and requested his good offices to obtain the suppression of the edition of the history. But when the professor was informed the work was to be suppressed to favor some *federal* gentlemen whose characters he did not admire, and also, that the *suppression* was to be kept a *profound secret*, he very properly declined having any thing to do with it.

After Mr. Wood had received his instructions from Mr. Burr, he applied immediately to Barlass and Ward, and entered on the duties of his office. But they were averse to informal negociation; they would not listen to verbal overtures. Accordingly Mr. Wood addressed to them the following *note, under the inspection of Mr. Burr.*

"New-York, December 11th, 1801.

"Gentlemen,

"I hereby propose to indemnify you for the nett expences of printing the history of the administration of John Adams, including the paper thereof, and to furnish you with a new manuscript copy in the space of *ten days from this date*, on condition that the present edition be entirely suppressed. *Should it not be suppressed, you will be prosecuted for the libels it contains.**

I am your's, Gentlemen,

JOHN WOOD.

"*Messrs. Barlass and Ward.*"

To Mr. Wood's note the following answer was received.

"New-York, December 11th, 1801.

"Sir,

"We have received your proposals, wherein you offer to indemnify us for our nett expences, and give us another manuscript copy within the space of ten days, provided we agree to suppress the edition which we have printed.

"We have no objection to suppress the work, provided we receive a competent indemnification. The nett expences

* It had been said by Mr. Burr, that if the proprietors would not suppress the work, they would (or should) be prosecuted by Mr. Dayton, who would not allow them the option of giving up the *author*.

would be no object to us, considering the risk we have run, and the trouble we have had; and also, the uncertainty but what we should be put to the same trouble again after we had printed the altered copy.—However we offer you the following conditions, which, if you agree to, you may depend upon the most strict compliance on our part.

"1st. We will entirely suppress the edition, provided we receive two thousand dollars, or,

"2d. We will run the risk of printing another edition, and destroy the one we have finished, for fifteen hundred dollars.

"N. B. If neither of the above proposals should be agreed to by you, we must publish the work with an appendix, wherein you may insert any corrections you may think proper.

M. WARD & Co.
WM. BARLASS."

"*Mr. John Wood.*"

To this letter Barlass and Ward received no immediate answer. It was most essential, in the first stages of the negociation, to stay the publication of the copy sent to London.—Concerning this previous arrangement, Mr. Wood was reduced to a troublesome alternative. To stop the publication of the London copy was absolutely indispensable. On the 12th of December the brig Recovery was to sail from this port to Greenock, and it was not known when another opportunity might occur. It was therefore necessary to transmit orders to London by the the Recovery to delay the publication of the copy until further instructions should be received. Here an interesting scene presented itself, and Mr. Wood was put to a severe trial. The first branch of his instructions was unequivocal and im-

perative on this head, *that he was not to mention the name of his employer, Mr. Burr, except in a case of the utmost necessity.* Although Mr. Wood might have availed himself of this latitude of phraseology, and have exercised a corresponding discretion, he was aptly cautious lest unfavorable circumstances should result from possible mis-judgment. Barlass and Ward were unwilling to supercede their orders to publish the copy sent to London, without being previously assured that no loss to them should ensue from the act: nor was Mr. Wood disposed to be responsible for money considerations which the negociation might involve: he viewed himself in the transaction simply as the agent of the vice-president. In this dilemma what was he to do? During the whole of this important day, which was to decide—I will not say the fate of America—but of the edition, no access could be had to Mr. Burr, for he had company! This hindered Mr. Wood from representing to Mr. Burr the extreme urgency of the case, and from having the benefit of his advice as to the proper expedient to be adopted in it. His only alternative, therefore, was to communicate to Barlass and Ward the name of the person for whom he was negociating the suppression. This he did, but with so much prudence and ability, as to induce Barlass and Ward to enter into a written agreement to *forfeit three hundred dollars in case they divulged Mr. Burr's name!**

To this part of the negociation Mr. Wood received the following note:

* This article is now in the hands of Mr. William P. Van Ness, of this city. This gentleman soon afterwards became a confidential and active agent of Mr. Burr in the suppression. It was with him Mr. Wood subsequently advised when Mr. Burr was absent, or when it was inconvenient to be approached!

"New-York, December 12, 1801.

"Sir,

"We received your note* requesting us to stop the copy, which we sent to England, of your history, *at the request of Mr. Burr*; at your desire we certify that *we look to Mr. Burr for compensation, and not to you.*

"M. WARD & CO.
"WILLIAM BARLASS."

"Mr. JOHN WOOD."

This difficulty being surmounted, orders were sent to London by the Recovery to prevent the publication of the copy. So far an important point was gained to Mr. Burr.

The next item in Mr. Wood's instructions directed him to prevail on Barlass and Ward, to accept the *nett amount* which the edition had actually cost, as the price of its suppression. We have already seen by their letter of December 11th, that the sum demanded was two thousand dollars, or fifteen hundred and a new copy. But by a calculation made on the part of Mr. Burr, it was found that the entire expence of printing the edition had perhaps cost ten, but certainly not more than eleven hundred dollars, and a determination was accordingly formed not to give a larger sum. Conformably to it, the proposition contained in Mr. Wood's note of December 11th was now again propounded, and by Barlass and Ward again refused. Frequent interviews were had without coming to a final settlement. Mr. Wood was limited in his instructions to eleven hundred dollars, a sum which the proprietors of the book thought much too small.

*This note is also in the hands of Mr. William P. Van Ness.

Here Mr. Burr resorted to a *happy* expedient to compel Barlass and Ward to accede to his proposition. It has already been stated that he was to furnish Mr. Wood with materials for writing new biographies of the President, Mr. Hamilton, C. C. Pinckney, Dayton, &c. He was also to supply him with such matter as would make the work appear almost entirely new. It was determined that the negociation should be prosecuted with less vigour; that it should be carried on in such a way as would be nearly equivalent to a suspension. During this relaxation, Mr. Wood was to compose *a new history* of the administration, preserving such parts only of the old one as accorded with the views of the vice-president. And as expedition was the soul of the expedient, an assistant to Mr. Wood was to be procured. Mr. Cornelius Van Ness, brother to Mr. William P. Van Ness, was mentioned by Mr. Burr as a trusty person, and truly fitted for the office. This young gentleman was to arrange the facts, and to lay them before Mr. Wood sheet by sheet in such order as that he might easily give to them his classical dress. As the sheets were thus written, they were to be sent to Mr. William A. Davis,* the *printer*, who it was supposed could work off an edition of twelve hundred and fifty copies (the number of Barlass and Ward's edition) in twelve or fourteen days. This was to be done with that secrecy and promptitude which characterize the movements of the vice-president. The first impression of the edition of the new history was to be presented to Barlass and Ward, accompanied with the single

* It is not ascertained whether Mr. Davis knew of this project. Perhaps he did. It is mentioned here as a *cabinet secret*, and as a real fact.

remark, that if they would suppress *their edition*, and take the *new one* in exchange, it would be well; if not, they might publish it, but that the *new one* would also be published.

This was an admirable project; like killing two birds with one stone, it would have secured to Mr. Burr two objects at once. In this case, Barlass and Ward would have found it their interest to *suppress* their *own edition*, and take the edition of the *new history* in exchange. On the other hand the price of the suppression would have been no greater than the price of printing the edition of the *new history*. Another advantage to Mr. Burr would have resulted from this delightful scheme; the *new history* would have been composed to please his own palate !*

Pending this *projet*, Barlass and Ward addressed to Mr. Wood the following letter :—

New-York, December 16, 1801.

Mr. Wood,

Having been delayed in the publication of your history some time, and having ordered back the copy we transmitted to London, by your order, we wish to come to some final determination upon the subject, as it will be impossible for us to be hindered in the publication any longer; we therefore as our ultimate conditions, offer you the following:

We will suppress the printed edition for $ 1250, provided we receive, *gratis*, another copy within the space of days.

* This remark is not made in derogation of Mr. Wood. The *new history* was to be written according to the materials furnished by Mr. Burr; and Mr. Wood's confidence in that gentleman, would have induced him to think them *sound*.

The money we have actually paid out amounts to $ 1050. The time we have lost by being delayed, the trouble we have had, the loss we shall sustain in stopping the London copy, and the disadvantage in laying a considerably time out of our money, we may calculate (at least) at $ 200; which sum, added to what we have already paid, is $ 1250.

If you are not inclined to agree to the above proposition, we will proceed to publish the work, you giving us immediately the corrections, which we will print in an appendix, but which must not exceed eight pages.

M. WARD & Co.
WILLIAM BARLASS."

" Mr. JOHN WOOD."

This letter plainly evinced that Barlass and Ward were descending rapidly from their lofty eminence. Hopes were entertained that by proper management the suppression might be effected to the satisfaction of both parties for eleven hundred dollars. The definite proposition was accordingly made to Barlass and Ward to give them that sum with the copy right of a *new history*. This mode upon the whole was preferred by Mr. Burr, since by it an amicable adjustment it was thought might be effected with suitable secrecy, and an edition of a new history be issued without the country being at all aware of the exchange.

Barlass and Ward closed with Mr. Wood's proposition to give them, to suppress the work, 1100 dollars and the copy right of the new history. The letter expressive of their assent to it is now in the possession of Mr. William P. Van

Ness. One half of the amount was to be paid *immediately* in specie, the other in notes at two and three months. *Mr. Burr ratified the agreement and promised to pay the money in good faith.* This contract was made about the 18th of December.

Barlass and Ward were now in daily expectation of receiving the money and the notes. Day succeeded to day, but without producing either. Fearful of disappointment they became alarmed. They were the more anxious since they were apprehensive that the agreement to suppress the work would become generally known, which, should Mr. Burr eventually recede from the contract, would injure the sale of the edition. Amid this anxiety of mind they received a note from Mr. Wood, dated December 26th, offering them *two hundred dollars* to relinquish their claim to the copy right of the *new history*. To this note the following one is an answer.

"New-York, December 26, 1801.

Mr. Wood,

We agree to deliver up to you the copy right of the new history of the administration of John Adams, for two hundred dollars* as soon as we have received the money which we are to receive for suppressing the edition which we have printed.

M. WARD and CO.
WILLIAM BARLASS."

This proposition to relinquish the copy right was made from the idea that the proceeds of the sale of an edition of the *New History* would be at least equivalent to the sum

* Mr. Ward and Co. relinquished their claim to the copy right on condition that they were to have the printing of the new history. Mr. Barlass was *promised* one hundred dollars for the relinquishment of his claim.

which *was to be paid* for the suppression of the *first one*. Viewing the matter in this light, it was concluded that Barlass and Ward might be indemnified for the surpression of the history, without Mr. Burr being eventually a loser by it.

Here the negociation ended, and nothing was wanting to carry it completely into execution but the due fulfilment of the stipulations mutually ratified and duly exchanged, to wit, the payment of the 1100 dollars for the suppression, and one hundred to Mr. Barlass for the relinquishment of his claim to the copy-right of the new history. A day was appointed to fulfil the agreement, but appointed in vain.

The appointed day was that on which Mr. Burr left this city, to take his seat in the senate of the United States. He had promised to pay the money and to give the notes; but to do either was inconvenient.

Previous to his departure, however, he informed Mr. Wood, who waited on him for the purpose, that he had given orders to Mr. William P. Van Ness to settle the business with Barlass and Ward, who would accordingly do so.

In conformity with the orders given by Mr. Burr to Mr. William P. Van Ness, Barlass and Ward applied to him for settlement: this was (I believe) the day after the vice-president left this city for Washington. Mr. Van Ness hesitated; said that Mr. Burr would have paid the money if he had had it, and expressed doubts of his ability to raise the sum himself. Frequent interviews were subsequently had, but without producing the desired effect. Barlass and Ward now found that it was necessary to adopt vigorous measures

to enforce the fulfilment of the agreement. Accordingly, Mr. Counsellor Wortman was consulted as to the propriety of instituting a suit against the vice-president for the recovery of the sum promised to be paid for the suppression of the edition. But it was thought most prudent again to apply to Mr. Burr, before a measure so harsh as an appeal to law was resorted to.

This application Mr. William P. Van Ness made by letter, which was received by Mr. Burr at Philadelphia, on his way to Washington. Mr. Van Ness's letter communicated to Mr. Burr the information (which was true) that the suppression had become a subject of public conversation, and that *his name* had been publicly mentioned as the person at whose instance the suppression had been effected. Mr. Burr was also informed in the letter, that Barlass and Ward looked to him for the sum agreed to be paid for the suppression. This is the import of the letter as mentioned by Mr. Van Ness to Barlass and Ward, who were not permitted to see it.

Mr. Burr's reply was laconic and pithy. It was addressed to Mr. Van Ness. The letter was not seen by Barlass and Ward; but the substance of it as communicated *verbally* by Van Ness to them is as follows:—

"He (Mr. Burr) was *surprised* his name was mentioned in the transaction; he was happy however the book was suppressed; he was sorry the business was not settled; but if they (Barlass and Ward) looked to him for the money they might do so." This was accepted by Barlass and Ward as a refusal to fulfil the agreement.

By this time the suppression, the manner in which it had been accomplished, and by and for whom, had become gene-

rally known. The novelty of the transaction excited much curious speculation. This was considered by Barlass and Ward unfavourable to the sale of the work, even if they should be inclined, in this discouraging state of things, to have recourse to it to indemnify themselves for the expence they had incurred in printing the edition.

They therefore resolved to try another expedient to induce Mr. Burr to comply with the conditions of the contract. They imagined that as the second officer in government he would have some concern for his reputation. Soaring to the first office in the Commonwealth they could not conceive that, for the paltry sum of 1200 dollars, he would suffer his character to be stained by a public exposition of so singular a transaction.

Accordingly Barlass and Ward communicated to Mr. William P. Van Ness their intention to publish the history with an appendix, setting forth the negociation, its nature, for whom it was commenced, the object which they thought was meant to be effected by it, together with the correspondence of the two parties. This produced a request from Mr. Van Ness, that they would wait until a letter could be sent to and an answer received from Washington.

Both Mr. Van Ness and Mr. Wood wrote to Mr. Burr informing him of the intention of Barlass and Ward to publish the history with an appendix as stated, provided he did not immediately order the money to be paid. Mr. Wood expressed his surprise that this had not been done.

No answer was returned to the letter of Mr. Wood; and nothing satisfactory was communicated by Van Ness to

Barlass and Ward, who now came to a resolution to prosecute Mr. Burr for the conditioned sum.

To enable them to do this, Mr. Wood was requested by Barlass and Ward to give them an affidavit of his connection with Mr. Burr in the suppression. This request was complied with, and Mr. Wood's affidavit was taken by Mr. Jonathan Pearsee, jun. Attorney at Law, and Notary Public in this city. The affidavit is now in the possession of Mr. William P. Van Ness. It states, that Mr. Wood "was employed by Mr. Burr about the beginning of December 1801, to bargain with Barlass and Ward for the suppression of the history of the administration of John Adams, late President of the United States, written by himself. That after several conferrences, he made an agreement with them to suppress it for 1100 dollars, one half to be paid in cash, and the other in notes at two and three months. One hundred dollars in addition were to be paid to Mr. Barlass for relinquishing his share of the copy right of the *new history*. That with this conclusion Mr. Burr was satisfied and promised to pay the money according to contract."*

Possessed of this affidavit, Barlass and Ward resorted to Richard Harrison, esq. late Recorder of this city, for his advice. Mr. Harrison viewed Mr. Wood as the *mere agent of Mr. Burr* in the negociation; and he entertained no doubt of the liability of Mr. Burr to the payment of the sum agreed upon for the suppression of the edition; he therefore advised a prosecution.

* This is copied from the writing given to Mr. Pearsee by Mr. Wood, and from which the affidavit was drawn up. It is but justice, however, to Mr. Pearsee to say, that the copy was not obtained from him; it was had from a very different quarter.

Still, however, a suit was not preferred. Sensible of the expence and of the "law's delay," they chose to make another effort to obtain the sum by gentle means in preference to appealing to the law.

Here a dawn of hope beamed upon them. Finding that Barlass and Ward were serious, and that bringing the matter before a court would not add to the fading lustre of the vice-president, Mr. Van Ness promised to pay the money.

Obstacles, however, occurred which occasioned procrastination of payment. Mr. William P. Van Ness penned a certificate, setting forth that Mr. Burr had nothing to do with the suppression, and that he knew nothing of the history until his return from Philadelphia!* This Mr. Wood was requested to sign, which he refused. In the certificate it was also stated that when Mr. Burr discovered his name was mentioned in the history, he was much offended! He wished not to be named in any political work! Mr. Wood was unwilling to set his hand to a paper of falshoods; and the artful project, therefore, of Mr. Van Ness to acquit Mr. Burr of the transaction, failed.

Mr. Van Ness now declared that he would give no more for the suppression than one thousand dollars, and that Mr. Barlass should abandon his claim to the one hundred which it was agreed should be given to him for his share of the copy right of the *new history*. Perceiving the obstacles which were thrown in the way of an adjustment agreeably to the original contract, Barlass and Ward bowed assent. So that one thousand dollars only were to be paid.

* Mr. Van Ness did not say that had he received instructions from Mr. Burr to make this propesition.

Writings were now to be executed to bind Barlass and Ward and Mr. Wood, to *an entire suppression of the history.* It was proposed by Mr. William P. Van Ness, that Mr. Wood should bind himself under a heavy penalty *never to write another history of the administration of Mr. Adams, nor any thing about the suppression of the one which he had written!* This was rejected. Mr. Wood was ready to enter into a contract not to publish or cause to be published the contents of the suppressed history. This he thought sufficient. He saw no reason why he should not, if he were inclined, write *another* history of the administration. He would not consent to be restrained from writing by any man. He considered himself at liberty in future to write or not to write as it should seem to him meet: he was therefore unwilling to receive the shackles which Mr. Van Ness graciously attempted to impose upon him!

Accordingly, a new instrument was draughted for Mr. Wood, which simply restrains him from publishing or causing to be published *the whole* or *any part* of the contents of the *suppressed history.* This he signed.

Suitable bonds were also draughted for Barlass and Ward which they executed; and *the one thousand dollars was paid to them by William P. Van Ness on or about the 12th day of May*, 1802.

On the 13th of May the whole edition, consisting of twelve hundred and fifty copies, was romoved, *between four and five o'clock of the morning*, from *Mr. Ward's book-store to the house of Mr. William P. Van Ness.*

The reader may perhaps ask why the *new history* has not been published? The answer is simple. Mr. Burr pro-

mised Mr. Wood, when he left this city for Washington, to furnish him with the materials for it in ten days. This, however, has not been done. It has been stated, that when Mr. Burr went from New-York to take his seat in the senate, he was unconscious that his name had been mentioned as the person to gratify whom the suppression was negociated. With this circumstance he afterward became acquainted, and it is probable he very properly concluded that Mr. Wood would not answer his purpose ! !

Such has been the rise, progress, and final conclusion of this singular transaction ; concerning which it may not be improper to offer a few reflections.

There are two modes of abridging the freedom of the *press;* the one by law, the other by purchasing literary productions, and by so doing making that invaluable Palladium of our Rights subservient to private views. The former is more pernicious because more universal. The latter is baleful only in proportion to the inclination and means of individuals to *suppress* publications, and the venality of authors. Both are, however, of one criminal nature ; and were they alike extensive in their operations, they would become equally injurious to the public. In one respect the abridgment of the freedom of the press by individuals is more pernicious than by law. In the latter case, there is no *suppression;* libellous publications are followed only by fine and imprisonment. These publications generally compensate the community for the sufferings of libellers. But where the competency of individuals enables them to *suppress* literary productions entirely, high public functionaries may jeopardize the state by criminal projects without being in danger of exposure. So far,

apart from other considerations, the public cannot but feel concerned, in the transaction which forms the subject of this narrative.

This practice is peculiarly inauspicious in a vice-president. It is omnious of a subtle, dangerous, and unfriendly disposition. It bespeaks a desire to cherish vice by concealment, and to elevate it upon the ruins of virtue. It exhibits a disposition to controul public opinion to the prejudice of the general welfare. It is, in one word, so incompatible with our conceptions of what the vice-president of the United States ought to be, that, were I not convinced the suppression was effected with a view to promote his election to the Presidency by endeavouring to impair the character of Mr. Jefferson, I should be astonished at the act.

Let me ask why the history was suppressed? Surely it could not have been done without a motive. Was it to shelter Mr. Wood from the penalties of the law that this *patron* of *literature* and the *fine arts* suppressed the edition? Was it because the history abounded with *libels* on federal characters and his consequent fear of Mr. Wood's being seized by the talons of the law? Even if this were his motive, however we might admire and applaud his *tenderness* for the *stranger*, we could not commend the act that consigned to oblivion, an octavo volume on a most interesting subject because of the defects of one of its pages. *But it was not.* For although Mr. Burr lightly observed that the history contained libellous passages, it is plain those passages made so faint an impression upon his mind as to leave not a trace behind. Incautiously enumerating his reasons for soliciting the suppression of the history, Mr. Burr was silent upon the libels he at first stated it contained. The suppression was accomplished to attain a much greater object, one

of much more value to Mr. Burr than the *safety* of Mr. Wood. Nor will it be believed that Mr. Burr, whose private concerns, like those of other men, call for all his pecuniary resources, would valuntarily offer *twelve hundred dollars* to shield Mr. Wood from *federal* prosecutions. The story is too Quixotic to be accredited in this " Age of Reason."

Let it be admitted that Mr. Burr suppressed the history *merely* to shield Mr. Wood from probable prosecutions ; how then shall we account for that *profound secrecy* which was almost to defy the all-piercing eye of omniscience ? Surely Mr. Burr had no occasion to conceal so good an act from the public. If he stood on truly republican ground, he had nothing to hope from the federalists ; nor had he any thing to fear from the republicans for performing a deed so meritorious, so benevolent. It would have redounded to his honour; it would have raised him in the estimation of his fellow-citizens. It would have had a tendency to obliterate those suspicions of his political conduct which he knew were entertained by honest and well informed men. Had he suppressed the edition from so praiseworthy a motive, those machinations which good men despise, and to which bad men some times resort, would have been unnecessary.

It is by ascertaining what *could not have been* Mr. Burr's reason for suppressing the history, that we shall arrive at the *true* and satisfactory one. Admitting that no dereliction of sentiment on his part had taken place at the commencement of the negociation, it will not be presumed that he would suppress the history because it was *evidently republican*. That it is entitled to this respectable appellation, no man whom Mr. Van Ness shall permit to read it, can have any

doubt. To what then shall we ascribe the suppression? On the one hand, to a desire to conciliate the affections of the federalists who acted prominent parts in the late administration, and whose conduct was severely censured by Mr. Wood; and on the other, to represent in a novel but unfavourable light, in the *new history*, of which he was to furnish the materials, the character of Mr. Jefferson and that of several of his most distinguished friends. If it should be asked what end these machinations were to answer? The response is at hand. To prepare the way for that *union* with the *federalists* which there is reason to believe is now *half completed*; to sully the lustre and tarnish the reputation of the executive.

This the writer presumes to think is the only rational conclusion that can be drawn from this singular and unprecedented transaction. It is one which he cannot resist; it is very strongly impressed on his mind. Other circumstances too of great weight, numerous, diversified and imposing, have a powerful tendency to convince him that no confidence in future ought to be placed by *republicans*, in the vice-president.

From this *union*, however, little is to be apprehended. The influence of Mr. Burr compared with that of the executive, is as an atom in comparison of the globe we inhabit. *Out* of this state he is scracely known; within it, *beyond* the limits of the city he may be truly said to have *no influence*; and even in the city he is universally distrusted except by *a very few individuals* who *favour his schemes from hopes of gaining by his elevation.*

It is time for "a union of all honest" *Republicans* to take place. A few individuals, desperate in fortune, devoid of good principle, of great enterprize, and unbounded ambition, however insignificant in their origin, may by national indifference, grow to a size which, like the conspiracy of *Cataline* of old, will menace the overthrow of the empire. By timely attention and spirited exertion that ruin may be averted with which the Union is in some sort now threatened.

This appeal is made to the nation at large, since the subject of it is of national concern. It is, however, peculiarly incumbent on the inhabitants of this city to frown upon the *little faction*. It is now in its infancy; time and inattention may swell it to a giant size. Every man sincerely attached to the present order of things, and to the *peace* and *freedom* of the union, ought to *discountenance*, not only Mr. Burr, but those *few persons** who are *known* to be in league with him. We know from experience what an executive can do. The union was convulsed to its centre by the machinations of Adams. We were threatened not only with war, but with the loss of freedom. It is fearful to reflect upon what our condition would in all probability be, were Mr. Burr at the head of our government. If Mr. Adams could do so much, how much more could Mr. Burr effect? It cannot be concealed that he is a man of *desperate fortune;* bold, enterprising, ambitious, and intriguing; thirsting for military glory and *Bonapartian* fame. A man of no fixed principle, no consistency of character, of contracted views as a politician, of boundless vanity, and listless of the public good; one who is pursuing with an "appetite keen as death, and a hand

* Their names shall be laid before the public at a proper season.

steady as time," projects disreputable to himself and injurious to the country.

Such is the character of the man who

" Fit to disturb the peace of the world"

is endeavouring by *little* arts, to supplant the chief-magistrate, and to estrange the affections of the people from him. This indeed has been his uniform practice from the very moment the republicans agreed to support Mr. Jefferson as President and himself as Vice-President. To effect this he had agents in the different States during the presidential election. This shall hereafter be proved.

It is a matter of extreme felicity that the improper intrigues of the Vice-President are well known by those men in different States who are most competent to guard against them; men whose attachment to Mr. Jefferson increases with his days; who view with mingled emotions of regret and indignation those acts of Mr. Burr which can only tend to make him odious to the people and blast his once flattering prospects. Had the Vice-President consulted his true interest, he would have accompanied the wishes and expectations of the people. Predicated on an unaccountable ignorance of his character, his calculations of them have been erroneous. The *American nation* will neither be surprised by artifice, nor subjugated by splendid deception. Duly appreciating their rights, their affections are to be won only by good offices. They love their executive for the good he has done and still does them. They repose confidence in him because he has never deceived them. Meriting and possessing their affections to an extent rarely equalled, he is

invincible to the stratagems of the Vice-President. The majesty of the people shines resplendently in the executive; that people who burst the chains of Mr. Adams, and who will rend the *silken* cord of Mr. Burr.

The following contents are extracted *verbatim* from the suppressed history. They are here inserted to enable the reader to form some idea of the general tenor of it.

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IT may be necessary to assign our reasons for publishing the following Biographies.

Since it became generally known that the History of the Administration of Mr. Adams was suppressed by Col. Burr, his few confidential friends who are sedulously endeavouring to promote his views, have industriously sought palliations for the act. Knowing the work was suppressed, and of course, that it could never come before the public, they have thought they could with *safety* assign a *spurious* reason for its suppression. They have stated that the History was an *aristocratic* one ; that it spoke in strains of unbounded *eulogium* of *federal*, and of disrespect of *Republican* characters. The History has by them been represented throughout as a *high-toned federal production* ; that from *pure patriotism*, and to *spare* the republican cause, Mr. Burr not only suppressed the work, but paid twelve hundred dollars out of his own private purse for the suppression! This story has had the

desired effect on many good citizens, who had it not in their power to say, "I have heard two opposite accounts on this subject, and I will therefore read the book and judge for myself." This was known to the propagators of it, who concluded they could circulate the misrepresentation without being liable to detection. The character of Mr. Hamilton was instanced which was said to be a chief d'œuvre of panegyric. To refute these calumnies, the following remarks, taken *verbatim** from the suppressed History, on the respective characters named, are here inserted. The life and character of Mr. Hamilton is *entire;* it is not a *part* of what Mr. Wood wrote in his History of that gentleman; but the *whole*. The whole of Mr. Jefferson's Biography contained in the history, would occupy about twenty pages of this narrative. That which relates to the early part of his political life, is only extracted; the whole would be too long for our purpose. It is all, however, exceedingly honorable to Mr. Jefferson, and such as every good and intelligent man would write respecting that estimable man. The facts mentioned in the extract are not Mr. Wood's; they are only clothed in his own language. All of moment that was said in the history of Mr. Dayton is here extracted, as well as the principal part of what Mr. Wood has written in it respecting General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. Enough is inserted in the Narrative concerning Mr. Adams to give the reader an idea of Mr. Wood's opinion of him. Of General Washington nothing was said in the history but what is hereafter stated. The remarks respecting this great man were the introductory ones of the first chapter of the History.

* For the accuracy of the extracts, we appeal to Mr. William P. Van Ness, in whose hands the whole edition now is.

BIOGRAPHY

OF

MR. JEFFERSON.

"THOMAS JEFFERSON was born in the year 1743, at Montecello, in the county of Albemarle, in Virginia—he was the eldest son of his father, who was a respectable landholder, and joint commissioner appointed with Colonel Fry for settling and extending the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, in 1749.

"About the age of fourteen he was sent to the university of William and Mary, in the city of Williamsburgh, a seminary which though not equal to the European schools, has yet produced several characters that in classical knowledge and legal abilities would do honour either to Cambridge or Oxford.

"The progress which young Jefferson made in the different departments of science and literature was rapid, and he obtained the degrees of the college with honour to himself and credit to his instructors. At the desire and advice of his relations, he commenced a course of law under the direction of George Wythe, now the venerable judge and sole chancellor of Virginia. Being naturally fond of philosophic pursuits, and accustomed to acute discrimination and logical discussion with his fellow students, he greatly facilitated the acquirement of legal knowledge, which he now studied as a profession.

"In 1766 he came to the bar of the supreme court of his

native State, and on his first appearance gave indication of talents that would rise to high eminence. Here he continued to practice with success and reputation until the commencement of the American revolution in 1775, when he was called forward to support the rights of his country, and for those important ends, which have been conspicuously realized in the various capacities in which he has acted.

"Mr. Jefferson is in his person tall and slender, of a fresh complexion, clear, penetrating eyes, his hair inclining to red, and of a deportment modest, affable and engaging. In early youth, the only period which fortune seems to have allotted him, for a social intercourse with the world, he was in every circle its ornament, instructor and pride. A close application aided by an uncommon strength of mind, supplied the want of many European advantages, without neglecting the particular study which was the primary object of his employment: Mr. Jefferson found sufficient time to attend to the polite acquirements. He relieved the tedious fatigue of law, by improving the knowledge of geometry, astronomy and natural philosophy, which he had acquired at the university; and the research of science, he occasionally blended with the lighter and perhaps more agreeable amusements of drawing and music. In the latter art he not only arrived at that degree of mediocrity which serves to soften the passions and refine the tender feelings, but was considered among amateurs as a considerable proficient.

"In 1774, when the inhabitants of America were roused into action by the tyranny and accumulated wrongs of the British

government, Mr. Jefferson published his celebrated pamphlet, "Summary View of the Rights of British America," addressed to the King, which brought forward against the author threats of prosecution from the Earl of Dunmore, then Governor of Virginia; Mr. Jefferson was obnoxious to this nobleman on another account. Dunmore was in his own country considered as one of the most intemperate and dissolute young men of his age—the climate of Virginia with the unlimited authority of a British Governor, served to inflame his passions and heighten his licentious habits. His hours in place of being spent by redressing the wrongs and lightening the grievances of the Virginia planters, were devoted to the gambling table, and the indulging of the sensual appetites. A young lady of the name of Campbell the daughter of a respectable merchant in Richmond, became the victim of his unbounded amours. Her brother, an officer in the King's service, called Dunmore to account for his injured sister. The haughty Governor, in place of giving the satisfaction which justice required, had him arrested and sent to England, where by the sentence of a court martial, he was deprived of his commission. A well wrote and accurate statement of this unwarrantable outrage appeared soon after in the public papers of Virginia: the author I am informed, was a lawyer of the name of Foster, but the Earl of Dunmore supposed it, from the ability displayed, to have been the production of Mr. Jefferson. His threats, however, produced no other effect than to cause Mr. Jefferson publicly to avow himself the author of the Rights of British America.

About this time he married an amiable woman, the daughter of Mr. Wayles, an eminent counsellor in Virginia; that

affectionate partner, unfortunately no longer exists.—The death of this lady in 1780, devolved on him a more weighty care, the education of two lovely daughters, their surviving issue; these have been reared under his own immediate inspection, and have accompanied his diplomatic functions whithersoever they have been directed.

It was not to be expected that a man of such conspicuous qualifications could be suffered long to remain in the shade of philosophic retirement. In the year 1775 he was elected a member of the Virginia convention, and on the 4th of August, in the same year, one of the members to represent that State, then colony of Virginia, in Congress. In this legislature, he became a distinguished and useful member, and has left many traces of sufficient importance to display his knowledge of legal jurisprudence.

In the memorable year of 1776, which separated the United States from their mother country, and gave the example of freedom to the monarchies of Europe, we find Mr. Jefferson advancing to a still more dignified station. He was chosen along with Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman and P. R. Livingston, to draw up the declaration of our independence, an instrument which will ever be considered as the magna charta of American liberty. It was from the elegant pen of Mr. Jefferson, who was first named on the committee, that this instrument proceeded, which so long as the records of time shall endure, will perpetuate the fame of its author. He was also honoured with the public confidence, by being appointed a member of the first congress, where he sat two years, supporting a character highly respectable, and which

will stand dignified in the judgment of our remotest posterity.

In the year 1778, Mr. Jefferson, being then a member of the Virginia legislature, presented to that body the act "to prevent the importation of slaves," which was enacted into a law in the month of October of the same year, and was shortly followed by another act "to authorise manumission," being the commencement of a system of general emancipation, also, proposed by him.

The first critical period in Mr. Jefferson's civil administration, was when he received the appointment of governor of Virginia in the year 1779, in the room of Patrick Henry, who was the first governor under the renovated constitution, and the successor of the Earl of Dunmore. Mr. Jefferson continued in this office until June 1781.

During these years, Mr. Jefferson had much to contend with. The State experienced three invasions, and he had, not only, to combat an open enemy in the field, but to encounter the insidious snares of a secret faction, who assailed his reputation and stabbed him in the dark. They insinuated that he had abandoned the government of Virginia to its enemies, and sought personal safety by flight to the mountains, and that he likewise had refused to pay military claims in preference to those of the civil list.*

In the year 1781 under the pressure of public business,

* *In answer to these slanderous falsehoods, I have transcribed the arguments of Mr. Jefferson's Biographer in an English publication, entitled "Public Characters of 1801."*

and family affliction, Mr. Jefferson prepared his celebrated work, afterwards published in Europe, entitled " Notes on Virginia."

" In the year 1783, Mr. Jefferson was appointed to a seat in congress, from whence he was nominated as ambassador to the court of Spain, but the approach of peace, it is presumed, rendered his voyage unnecessary. In the following year on the 7th of May, he was nominated by that honourable body, minister plenipotentiary of the United States, to the court of France, as the successor of the venerable Franklin. From thence he communicated his negociations concerning the freedom of the tobacco trade, and the powerful opposition of the farmer's general, &c. to Mr. Jay, then our minister of foreign affairs in a letter dated the 27th of May 1786. In the letter he evinces considerable diplomatic talents and success, having gained the approbation of M. D. Vergennes and the acquiesence of M. de Calonne. He has also recommended to the people of Carolina, an improvement in the preparing their staple commodity, rice, in order to lead the Mediterranean market. In another letter to Dr. Stiles President of Yale College, dated Paris, September 1st, 1786, he displays a fund of sentiment and information sufficient to intitle him to the confidence of his country and the admiration of society.

" On the 23d of October 1786, M. de Calonne announced to Mr. Jefferson, by letter from Fontainbleau, the intention of the king of France to favour the commerce of the United States as much as possible, to double the number of their free ports, to reduce the duties which were prejudi-

cial to the commerce with America; that after the expiration of a contract made by the farmer's general with Mr. Morris, concerning tobacco, no similar one should be permitted; and that during the existence of Mr. Morris's contract, the farmer's general should be compelled to purchase annually about fifteen thousand hogsheads of American tobacco. This regulation of the tobacco trade, though not wholly, is in conformity to the principles proposed by Mr. Jefferson."

BIOGRAPHY

OF

MR. HAMILTON.

"As General Hamilton acted a conspicuous part during the late administration, in promoting the views of the federal interest, in combating the enemies of the British treaty, and opposing what was unjustly termed jacobin influence, it is proper that some account of that able officer and intelligent lawyer, should appear in this volume.

"Alexander Hamilton was born about the year 1753, in the island of St. Croix, his father was a merchant of some eminence, and he himself was educated to the same profession; he acted for several years as a clerk, to a counting

house in that island, and acquired by an active diligence, the favour and esteem of all with whom he had connection—at the age of eighteen he was sent in the same capacity to New-York, in which sphere of life he continued until the commencement of the revolutionary war.

"This was the theatre for which nature had destined young Hamilton; he entered into the American army, and distinguished himself by uncommon enterprise and valour. His reputation procured him the appointment of an aid-de-camp to general Washington. In the year 1780 he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and at the siege of York-Town commenced the attack on one of the redoubts, the capture of which, decided the fate of lord Cornwallis and his army. The conduct of Mr. Hamilton on this occasion, was truly honourable, and in the history of his life, ought to weigh against several of those scars that have since disgraced his character. Previous to the assault, the Marquis de la Fayette proposed to general Washington to put to death all the British troops that should be found within the redoubts, as a retaliation for several acts of barbarity committed by the royal army. The steady and nervous mind of Washington, which was never known to yield to the virtuous prejudice of compassion, gave his assent to the bloody order, but Mr. Hamilton (the tenderness of whose feelings has led him into error,) after the redoubts were subdued, took the conquered under his protection, and proved to his enemies that America knew how to fight, but not to murder.

"When the war was at an end and the army was disbanded, Mr. Hamilton betook himself to the study of the law;

for this purpose he retired to Albany, where he secluded himself for several months, at the end of which, he appeared at the bar of New-York, where in a short time he acquired the reputation of an able advocate in point of legal knowledge and rhetorical talents. At this period, the political sentiments of Mr. Hamilton were observed to change, from being a zealous republican and the defendant of the right of America, he gradually imbibed the tenets of aristocracy, until at length he became the admirer and advocate of every measure allied to monarchy.

" This change in Mr. Hamilton's principles, which at first proceeded from conviction, and has since been strengthened by views of interest, is easy to be accounted for.

" Mr. Hamilton unfortunately, was a native of that part of the civilized world, where tyranny and slavery prevail in a manner, even, unknown to the despots of Europe; it was utterly impossible that the habits and prejudices he contracted in infancy could ever have been eradicated. The desire of ambition and power, which poisoned the first drop of blood that flowed in his veins, could only have been suppressed by a more powerful passion: this was the passion of war. Mr. Hamilton panted after fame and glory, and joined the republican standard as the most promising field for a display of those powers he possessed. He fought for liberty with the same zeal as a Briton would engage in the support of the grand Turk or Dey of Algiers. To acquire the applause of his commander, and respect of his fellow soldiers, was his pride and ambition. In this he was successful, and when

liberty was the object of his struggle, he was a republican: but when America had procured her independence and the horrors of a civil war were at an end, Mr. Hamilton had no longer a scope for his ambition in the theatre of arms. In his study of law he perceived another path to power; his copious imagination took a rapid survey of the civil code, the fascinating structure upon which the feudal system is raised and the combined policy of English jurisprudence. In this fabric of human knowledge the production of ages, Mr. Hamilton perceived something more lofty and splendid than those simple forms which modern republicanism cultivates. The grandeur attendant on hereditary titles pleased his mind and flattered his vanity. The American tory against whom he had fought, he now began to defend, and in every suit where a loyalist was concerned, Mr. Hamilton was the royal pleader. It is a certain fact, that a great majority of the loyalists in the state of New-York, owe the restoration of their property solely to the exertions of this able orator.

" Before the federal government was established, in the year 1788 Mr. Hamilton prepared a new constitution to be composed of the following articles.*

Such a constitution as there sketched out by Mr. Hamilton, would have been a direct extirpation of the rights of Americans. Experience has proved that the number of senators is so small, that a president may always command the ac-

* *The constitution referred to is the one general Hamilton proposed in the convention who formed the present federal constitution.*

quiesence of the majority in any measure he thinks proper. If therefore, the president and senate were to hold their places for life, nothing could be expected but tyranny and corruption. With the powers conferred by Mr. Hamilton, the president of the United States would only require the title of monarch, to fit him for the company of the despots of Europe.

"In the year 1788 Mr. Hamilton was appointed secretary of the treasury: while in this department a circumstance occurred, which will ever place his character in a suspicious point of view. This is his celebrated avowed intrigue with Mrs. Reynolds the wife of Mr. Reynolds, whose father had been in the commissary department during the revolutionary war. Reynolds and one Jacob Clingham, a clerk in the employment of Mr. Muhlenburgh, were arrested towards the close of 1792, at the instance of Mr. Wollcot the comptroller of the treasury, on a charge for supposition of perjury. Clingham procured bail but Reynolds did not; when the latter was in custody, Clingham applied to Mr. Muhlenburgh for his aid in behalf of himself and Reynolds, and repeatedly dropped hints, that Reynolds knew several very improper transactions of Mr. Hamilton, signifying that he was deeply concerned in speculation, and that he had it in his power, even, to hang him. This information created such uneasiness in the mind of Mr. Muhlenburgh that he consulted with two of his friends, Mr. Munroe and Mr. Venable, on the subject, they waited on Reynolds, who appeared to confirm the report made by Clingham, and added, he could not communicate the particulars as he was apprehensive it might prevent his discharge, but what he

would disclose the whole when liberated; he procured his discharge through the interest of Hamilton, the morning after the visit to Munroe and Venable, and immediately absconded.

" The sudden enlargement and flight of Reynolds, were additional proofs of the truth of what Clingham had suggested. Messrs. Muhlenburgh, Munroe and Venable in order to obtain some information respecting the singular story, waited upon Mrs. Reynolds, the wife of the run-away, they found her alone, and in a state extremely agitated; after some difficulty, they obtained the following particulars; that colonel Hamilton and her husband had been for some time in the habit of correspondence, but at the request of the former, and in the absence of the latter, she had burned almost all the letters; that colonel Hamilton offered her his assistance to go to her friends, and he also advised that her husband should leave this country not to be seen again, in which case he would give her something clever.

" Mrs. Reynolds also told Clingham, that her husband received from colonel Hamilton at one time $ 1100; Reynolds himself said, that colonel Hamilton had made $30,000 by speculation, and had supplied him with money to speculate.

" Clingham reported that after Reynolds was discharged, which was about eight or nine o'clock in the evening, he (Reynolds) sent a letter about twelve o'clock at night to colonel Hamilton by a girl, whom Reynolds followed to the

door. When the girl returned, he informed Clingham that he need not go out of town that night, but would call upon colonel Hamilton next morning.

"These are the general particulars respecting this intricate correspondence, contained in the reports of Messrs. Muhlenburgh, Munroe and Venable, which were made public by Mr. Calender in the 1796.

"Mr. Hamilton immediately came forward with his defence, or rather a confession of a crime even of a more henious complexion than pecuniary speculation. He avowed himself to the world to have been the seducer of an amiable though unfortunate woman.

"No words can paint the baseness of this action more forcibly than the language of Mr. Hamilton. "The charge against me is a connection with one James Reynolds for purposes of improper pecuniary speculation: my real crime is an amorous connection with his wife, for a considerable time, with his privity and connivance.

"This confession is not made without a blush; I cannotbe the apologist of any vice, because the ardor of passion may have made it mine. I can never cease to condemn myself for the pang which it may inflict in a bosom eminently entitled to all my gratitude, fidelity and love: but that bosom will approve, that even at so great an expence, I would effectually wipe away a more serious stain, from a name which it cherishes with no less elevation than tenderness. The public

too, will I trust, excuse the confession, the necessity of it to my defence against a more heinous charge, could alone have extorted from me so painful an indecorum."

"Mr. Hamilton by his own account, became acquainted with Mr. Reynolds in the following manner. Some time in the summer of 1790, a woman called at his house in the city of Philadelphia, and asked to speak with him in private, he of course attended her into a room apart from the family, with a seeming air of affliction she informed him that she was a daughter of Mr. Lewis, sister to Mr. G. Livingston of the State of New-York, and wife to Mr. Reynolds, whose father was in the commissary department during the war with Great Britain: that her husband, who for a long time had treated her very cruelly, had lately left her to live with another woman, and in so destitute a condition, that though desirous of returning to her friends, she had not the means: that knowing colonel Hamilton was a citizen of New-York, and a generous man, she had taken the liberty to apply to his humanity for assistance.

"Mr. Hamilton says that he was disposed upon hearing her story to afford her assistance, but it not being convenient for him at the moment, he requested the place of her residence. She very readily relieved his anxiety and gave him the street and number of the house where she lodged. Towards evening, he put a bank bill in his pocket, and making some apology to Mrs. Hamilton, went off to administer comfort to the distressed female. He enquired for Mrs. Reynolds and was shown up stairs, at the head of which, the lady met him and conducted him into her bed-room. He took the bill

out of his pocket and slipped it into her hand, some tender conversation then ensued, from which it was quickly apparent (says Mr. Hamilton) "that other than pecuniary consolation would be acceptable."

Such was the nature, according to Mr. Hamilton, of his connection with Reynolds and his wife. He rambled for 18 months in this scene of pollution, and squandered by all accounts above $ 12,00 to conceal the intrigue from his loving spouse. Those who experience the same tender feelings with Mr. Hamilton, may give credit to his tale of shame; but the cold hearted enquirer will more probably assign his profligacy to a different cause, at any rate he will allow that a person of such amorous habits was by no means qualified to fill the office of Secretary of the Treasury.

"The next important incident in the history of Mr. Hamilton, is his defence of the British treaty, he appointed a day to meet its opponents and convince them by argument, of the benefits arising to the United States from the articles it contained.

"No place is more unfit for a display of logical reason than the assembly of a tumultuous mob. The rhetoric of Mr. Hamilton was soon overpowered by hisses and shouts of reproach. When he was thus prevented from advocating its cause by the force of oratory, he had recourse to the eloquence of the pen, and published a series of letters under the signature of Camillus in defence of the British treaty.

"These letters, though the sentiments they contain are

inimical to the interest of this country, ought notwithstanding, to be held in the highest veneration by every lover of literature. The correct style of language which they exhibit, will be long a model of perfection to Americans, and without laying claim to the gift of prophecy, I may safely assert, that the pages of Camillus will be read when the British treaty and the name of governor Jay will be otherwise buried in oblivion.

" Mr. Hamilton has been severely censured, and perhaps with justice as being the author of the funding system; the promoter of the snuff excise law, that passed the 5th of June 1794, and the cause of the war of 1790, with the north western Indians.

" Mr. Hamilton was in 1798, appointed inspector general and commander in chief next to Washington, of the army of the United States. This promotion, the merits of Mr. Hamilton certainly deserved. His abilities in this respect dare not be doubted: and if ever it should be the misfortune of America to be involved in a war, while Mr. Hamilton lives, it would be both imprudent and unjust, were he deprived of a principal command.

" The literary fame of general Washington, is said to have been raised on the talents of Alexander Hamilton, and report even whispers that Hamilton himself claims the merit of Washington's letters, and that he has boasted of receiving letters from gen. Washington with the word private wrote on the back of them and a cross drawn over the seal. After opening such a parcel, the contents were " *Dear Ham-*

ilton put this into style for me," prefixed to some speech or letter inclosed. The letters of Washington are, however, much inferior to those of Hamilton, and differ remarkably in point of style. Most probable they no more received the new correction of Hamilton, than the lectures of Sir Joshua Reynolds did the finishing stroke of Edmund Burke.

" Such are the general outlines of the life and character of Alexander Hamilton. As a soldier and scholar, he has rendered most eminent services to the United States, but as a political character, he has been the greatest misfortune."

OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

[*Extracted from Mr. Wood's History.*]

" The United States of America enjoyed under the administration of the illustrious Washington, all those advantages which result from the prudent policy of a virtuous magistrate. The peaceful system which he pursued, repaired in a great measure, the injuries sustained by a long and expensive civil war. His interests and passions were the same as those of the people, and a constant communication of good offices kept alive their attachments."

OF JONATHAN DAYTON,

[*Extracted from Mr. Wood's History.*]

"JONATHAN DAYTON, of New-Jersey, the late speaker of Congress, is notorious from Boston to Georgia. The deeds of the other members of Congress, were scarcely known beyond the circles of their respective States, but the speculations of this man have rung throughout the western world. They are unfolded in sixteen letters to one Francis Childs, which were made public by a bill of complaint, which Dayton and one Lawrence presented to the Chancellor of New-York against Childs. The letters will speak for themselves; for any comment upon such a scheme would only tend to render stale and less flagrant the rascality of the transaction. Some crimes are so horrible in their nature as will not endure the lash of censure; and the actions of Dayton are of this class."

OF CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

[*Extracted from Mr. Wood's History.*]

"In 1794, Col. Pinckney was appointed Commander in Chief of the Militia of South-Carolina, which station he held until his memorable embassy to France: the particulars of that diplomatic expedition have been already narrated. As a

soldier, General Pinckney deserves every encomium of applause; but as a *political character*, although he does not possess so much integrity as Hamilton, yet it would be great injustice to place him on the same scale with Mr. Adams, or even the most virtuous of his adherents, General Pinckney possesses at least some principles of honor, and a share of judgment that will always prevent him from covering his country with disgrace."

CHAPTER XII.

Quarrel at Trenton between Mr. Adams and his miniſters—Hamilton's letter reſpecting their differences—Appointment of an embaſſy to France—Characters of the Envoys—Anecdotes of Adams and Franklin—Adams's jealouſy and diſlike to Franklin—Adams's endeavour to calumniate Franklin—Vindication of Franklin—Memoirs of Alexander Hamilton.

"IN the town of Trenton, the capital of New-Jerſey, the firſt public ſchiſm in the federal cabinet took place.

" The particular expreſſions which paſſed on this occaſion, between the Preſident and his miniſters never tranſpired; but from the printed letter addreſſed to Mr. Adams, by General Hamilton, we are informed of the principal cauſe of their difference.

" Mr. Hamilton aſſerts, that after the failure of the Pinckney embaſſy to France. Mr. Adams arrived at Philadelphia, from his ſeat at Quincy, and that " the tone of his mind ſeemed to have been raiſed rather than depreſſed." That his counſellors ſuggeſted to him that it might be expedient to inſert in his ſpeech to Congreſs a ſentiment of this import.

" That after the repeatedly rejected advances of this country, its dignity required that it ſhould be left with France in future to make the firſt overture; that if deſirous of reconciliation, ſhe ſhould evince the depoſition by ſending a miniſter to this government, he would be received with the due reſpect to his character, and treated with the frankneſs of a ſincere deſire of accommodation." Mr. Adams received this ſuggeſtion in a manner both indignant and in-

temperate, and declared, "*That if France ſhould ſend a miniſter to-morrow, he would order him back the day after.* But in leſs (ſays Mr. Hamilton) than forty-eight hours from this extraordinary ſally, the mind of Mr. Adams underwent a total revolution. "He reſolved not only to inſert in his ſpeech the ſentiment which had been propoſed to him, but to go farther, and to declare, that if France would give explicit aſſurances of receiving a miniſter from this country with due reſpect, he would ſend one."

"In vain did Pinckney and M'Henry oppoſe this reſolution. Mr. Adams obſtinately perſiſted and the declaration was introduced.

"Mr. Adams appears afterwards to have nominated Mr. Murray as Envoy to the French Republic, without previous communication with any of his miniſters. Shortly after he nominated two more, Judge Elſworth and Mr. Davie.

"Mr. Elſworth's talents were no doubt great, but his opinions reſpecting law were formed upon the Mansfield ſyſtem. His deciſion in the caſe of Capt. Williams, was directly oppoſed to the law of nations, and to the former practice of the American courts. His knowledge of European affairs was alſo very limited in theory as well as practice.

"George Davie was better calculated for the miſſion. This gentleman was about 40 years of age; poſſeſſed of engaging manners and an eaſy addreſs; he had been educated at Princeton College; ſerved with reputation in the revolutionary war; afterwards ſtudied the profeſſion of the law, and previous to his appointment, was made a General in the proviſional army, and elected governor of North-Carolina.

" When the news of the revolution in the Directory arrived, Mr. Hamilton ſays, that Mr. Adams was then at his ſeat in Maſſachuſetts, and that his miniſters addreſſed to him a joint letter, communicating the intelligence, and ſubmitting to his conſideration, whether that event ought not to ſuſpend the projected miſſion. Mr. Adams, in reply, directed the preparation of a draft of inſtruction for the envoys, and intimated that their departure ſhould be ſuſpended for ſome time.

" Mr. Adams arrived ſoon after at Trenton, about the 17th of October, where he held a council with his miniſters. Judge Elſworth and General Hamilton were alſo preſent, though not at the deſire of Mr. Adams. Mr. Hamilton ſays in his letter, that he arrived at Trenton a ſhort time before the Preſident, and Chief Juſtice Elſworth a ſhort time after him ; that the object of his own journey was to concert with the Secretary at War, certain arrangements for the future diſpoſition of the Weſtern Army, and that the cauſe of Judge Elſworth's arrival was to meet his colleague, Governor Davie, at the ſeat of government. " Yet theſe ſimple and accidental occurrences," ſays Mr. Hamilton, " were to the jealous mind of Mr. Adams, *confirmations ſtrong* of ſome miſchievous plot againſt his independence."

" Mr. Adams is ſaid, at this memorable meeting, to have obſerved a profound ſilence on the queſtion, whether or not it was expedient that the miſſion ſhould proceed. His ſecretaries Pickering and M'Henry, as alſo General Hamilton, diſapproved of the propriety of the embaſſy, and endeavoured to bring the Preſident over to their opinion, but their arts were of no avail. The morning after the inſtructions were ſettled, he ſignified to Mr. Pickering, that the envoys were ready to depart.

"This reſolution of the Preſident was, by the Hamiltonian party, regarded as bad policy, and incompatible with the dignity of Americans. By the anti-federaliſts, it was, on the contrary, eſteemed a promiſing ſentiment of repentance; but if we examine carefully the character and motives of Mr. Adams, it will appear that he was induced to this conciliatory meaſure, neither from a diſreſpect to his country, nor from the commendable deſire of promoting republicaniſm; but moſt probably with the baſe deſign of rendering odious the meaſures of his Secretaries, the power of whom his jealouſy began to dread.

"The vain and weak judgment of Mr. Adams eaſily figured, that if Pinckney, Hamilton and Pickering were removed from the road to power, he might by courting popular applauſe, riſe on the ſhoulders of the people to an imperial throne, from whence he and his poſterity might dictate to the inhabitants of half the globe.

"No man's vanity can reaſonably be ſuppoſed to exceed that of Mr. Adams. Weakneſs in intellect, which is generally the attendant of pride, is the predominant mark in his character. Theſe cauſes render his temper unſufferable to his moſt intimate friends. On many occaſions Mr. Hamilton ſays, "he is liable to paroxiſms of anger, which deprive him of ſelf-command, and produce very outrageous behaviour to thoſe who approach him." But the eternal rancour which Mr. Adams always evinced againſt the great and good Franklin, is the moſt convincing proof, both of his vanity and the weakneſs of his underſtanding; ſeveral well atteſted anecdotes confirm the truth of this aſſertion.

" During the embaſſy of Franklin, Adams and Lee at Paris, a fete was given in honour of America, by a Mrs. Bertrand, the lady of a nobleman who acted in capacity of lord in waiting to the King. Mrs. Bertrand was one of thoſe celebrated female politicians, who uſed to be in the employ of the court, for the purpoſe of diſcovering, by her intrigues, the ſecret ſprings and intentions of foreign cabinets—ſhe was alſo a lady of ſcience, and the principle patroneſs of the arts in Paris. Her veneration for Franklin was equal to her contempt for Mr. Adams; but Adams and Lee, with almoſt every American of education then at Paris, were of courſe invited to partake of the pleaſures of an entertainment, intended as a compliment to their country. During the performance of a theatrical piece, the portrait of Franklin was introduced on the ſtage—an univerſal burſt of applauſe enſued which wounded the feelings of Mr. Adams to ſuch a degree, that he feigned ſickneſs and left the performance.*

" Mr. Adams ſoon after, in a letter to a friend in this country, complained, " we are all here mere ſatellites, revolving in the orbet of the planet Franklin, borrowing all our light from him, and unable to diffuſe any of our own through his ſuperior influence."

" During his adminiſtration Mr. Adams gave countenance to every calumny which reflected upon the memory of that great philoſopher; he enjoyed with ſecret triumph, the vulgar and ſlanderous abuſe which was darted by the miſcreant Porcupine, at Franklin's diſcoveries. He was even fond and ſedulous, when occaſion offered to caſt a ſhade over his moral and political reputation; but the moſt daring and

* Dr. James Smith now in New-York, was preſent and ſeated near Mr. Adams at the above fete.

villainous ſcheme in which it is reported Mr. Adams aſſiſted to blacken the character of that illuſtrious man, and wound the feelings of his relations, was an attempt to accuſe him of public peculation.

"In the early part of the American revolution, a million of livres was lent us by the French government. After Franklin's death the enemies of liberty ſpread abroad inſinuations, that Dr. Franklin had appropriated this money to himſelf! They contrived alſo to poſſeſs themſelves of all the public papers by which his defendants could vindicate his reputation. This was done in the moſt artful manner. The ſum of 15,000l. ſterling, was given to Mr. Charles Dilly, a book-ſeller in London (who had contracted to publiſh a hiſtory of his life) to purchaſe all the documents which he had received from the family of Dr. Franklin. The only remaining channel of truth were the papers in poſſeſſion of adminiſtration. Theſe were applied for, but refuſed in the moſt contemptuous manner.

"Mr. Adams was not to be diſturbed, or the offices of the treaſury ranſacked, to pleaſe the whims of a few individuals," was the anſwer reported to be given. When, however, the recent change in the executive took place, and the records of ſtate were brought forth from the cells of federal fraud, to bluſh at public inſpection; the facts appeared to be, viz. that the American government was charged with the ſum in queſtion, and it had been allowed in the general liquidation of the French debt, though it had been objected to under Gen. Waſhington. When Gouverneur Morris was at Paris, as our miniſter, he took advantage of the paſſions of th revolutionary period, and addreſſed a letter to the committee of public ſafety, wherein he obſerved, "that it was time indeed to throw off that ſecrecy which involved in obſcurity the

tranſactions of cabinets and the councils of deſpots. The American and French republics could have no ſecrets. Their acts were to be regulated by principles, not actuated by ſordid or perſonal intereſts." He therefore ſolicited an enquiry into the mode by which the million in queſtion had been beſtowed, and to whom. The political fanaticiſm of the day was caught by the jeſuital addreſs of the wooden-legged envoy, and an account was rendered as it appeared on the public record of the royal department of foreign affairs.

" The friends of Mr. Adams had inſinuated the money was given to Dr. Franklin, Gouverneur Morris was, therefore, entruſted to carry the enquiry up to the ſource. After examination, he diſcovered that the ſum had been appropriated and lent to America before Dr. Franklin left this country. The ſuſpicion was, therefore, transferred to Silas Deane ; it was concluded, that Deane could not have the money without Dr. Franklin partaking of the ſpoil or conniving at the robbery. Upon farther inveſtigation, it was found that the money was given even before Deane arrived in France. This was a dilemma which had not been foreſeen ; but having proceeded ſo far, it was neceſſary to go the whole length ; and upon application by Mr. *Morris* an official copy of the receipt was given, which is now on the records of government, which ſhews that the money was procured from the count of Vergennes, by *Caron Beaumarchais ;* and a M. Chevalier, who acted as agent for this banker, and lives in the city of Richmond, has been debited in his account with the United States for that million.*

* This circumſtance I have from a near relative of Dr. Franklin, upon whoſe veracity I can place the greateſt reliance.

" All these facts must have been known to the late administration; but John Adams felt neither the generosity nor the justice due to the memory of Franklin, or the honour of his country to reveal the truth."

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